UNITED
NATIONS

DP

Governing Council
of the
United Nations
Development Programme

Distr.
GENERAL

DP/CP/MEX/NOTE/5
31 May 1992
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

Thirty-ninth session
4-29 May 1992, Geneva
Item 6 of the provisional agenda

PROGRAMME PLANNING

Country and Intercountry Programmes and Projects

FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR MEXICO

Note by the Administrator

I. THE PROGRAMMING EXERCISE

1. The programming exercise for the fifth programme for Mexico formally began in June 1989 with the formulation of a national strategy for the international cooperation which Mexico receives. This process included an analysis of the programming guidelines contained in General Assembly resolution 44/211 of 22 December 1989 and Governing Council decision 90/34 of 23 June 1990.

2. Starting with the second half of 1989, the Government, with the support of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organization of American States, in a pioneering exercise in joint endeavour in the region, undertook six projects with a view to formulating national technical cooperation programmes in the following six priority areas: water; biotechnology; ecology and environment; telecommunications, microelectronics and informatics; new materials; and poverty and population. The purpose of these projects was to formulate diagnoses of the present situation and development prospects, in both the national and international contexts, identifying hierarchies, programmes and specific projects. In addition, an integrative project extracted the elements for systematizing and homogenizing the country programmes for the purpose of formulating an indicative framework of international technical cooperation.

3. The definitive formulation of the fifth programme, done by the Government, brings together the recommendations made at work sessions with the General Department of Technical and Scientific Cooperation of the Department of Foreign Affairs on the basis of the considerations presented in the UNDP

advisory note addressed to the Government in mid-1991, the general evaluation of the fourth programme, and the observations of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

4. The Administrator notes with great satisfaction the effort undertaken by the Government in the preparation of the national programmes of technical cooperation for the formulation of an indicative framework of international technical cooperation, within which project packages were designed, matching the requirements of the different sources offering bilateral and multilateral cooperation within a programme approach whereby it will be possible to optimize resources and coordinate the efforts of all the sectors concerned. Furthermore, the recent creation of the Coordinating Unit for the National Execution of Technical Cooperation Projects will provide the Government with a suitable instrument for monitoring and evaluating this coordination effort.

II. ANALYTICAL COMMENTARY ON THE FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME

5. The chief aim of the fifth programme for Mexico, which covers the period 1992-1996, is to strengthen the capacity of the Government in executing priority programmes in the areas mentioned above which are currently in progress, representing an important transformation taking place within the country.

6. UNDP cooperation strategy consists essentially in strengthening this capacity of the Government in specific ways, concentrating on the preparation of projects having one or more of the following functions: to generate financing from other sources; to encourage the allocation of supplementary resources by other agencies and/or countries; to serve as a central administrative/financial mechanism for funds of multiple origin; to combine traditional-type actions with speedy disbursements for infrastructure works; to provide management services in which UNDP acts as supplier of goods and services at the request of the Government; and to coordinate efforts by the Government to assess the impact of the technical cooperation programmes.

7. The fifth programme identifies four areas of interest in which UNDP has comparative advantages for lending direct cooperation and encouraging the support of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other cooperators. These areas of interest coincide with the priorities of the National Development Plan and with the human development approach within which UNDP frames its activities. UNDP cooperation can be summarized as follows:

(a) Water, ecology and environment, an area which relates the efforts of the Government toward preparing, both quantitatively and qualitatively, the necessary human resources to improve and develop the area, chiefly in scientific research, technological development and public management; toward consolidating and developing the hydraulic infrastructure; developing integral programmes of environmental improvement in critical cities, such as the metropolitan areas of the cities of Mexico, Monterrey and Guadalajara, and priority drainage areas and harbours, in particular the Lerma-Chapala-Santiago, Pánuco, San Juan and Balsas rivers and the ports of Coatzacoalcos, Lázaro Cárdenas, Altamira and Guaymas; preventing and

controlling pollution in industrial and service branches, especially petroleum, petrochemistry, sugar, iron and steel, the chemical industry and tourism; and protecting and preserving flora and fauna that are threatened and in danger of becoming extinct. For the purpose of carrying out the proposed activities, 22.5% of the total resources of the fifth programme are allocated to this area;

(b) Poverty and population, an area associated with the National Solidarity Programme created by the Government in 1988 for the purpose of dealing with the urgent needs of the population living in conditions of extreme poverty. UNDP cooperation will be directed toward linking international, bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the Solidarity Programme with a view to contributing to the development of communities and population groups through support for the formulation and execution of specific projects for improving the living conditions of peasant and native groups and residents of popular quarters; promoting balanced regional development and providing conditions for the productive improvement of the standards of living of the population; and promoting and strengthening the participation and management of local authorities and social organizations. In addition, support will be provided for the management of financing with countries and multilateral, non-governmental and financial organizations to increase the resources for the area and promote the intensification and extension of the programme to a larger group of recipients, basically through productive projects relating to development in the areas of agriculture, agribusiness, mining and forestry and in urban popular quarters. The Government has agreed to allocate 16.0% of the total resources of the fifth programme for carrying out the proposed activities;

(c) High technology, an area connected with the Mexican strategy of inserting the country into the world economy while taking advantage of new technology, with a view to modernizing and increasing the country's production facilities and being able to meet international standards of competitiveness and production quality, primarily in the fields of biotechnology, new materials and information technology. UNDP cooperation will contribute to the development of this area in respect of the following aspects: support for the Government's bilateral and multilateral negotiations aimed at increasing training and refresher courses for national specialists and gaining access to already-formed scientific and technological infrastructures; support for partnerships with groups and centres in other countries with development levels comparable to that of Mexico, with a view to establishing joint projects for research and the training of specialized human resources; the design and promotion of mechanisms that combine the traditional modalities of cooperation with new procedures that favour diversification of protagonists and resource sources, both for the transfer of knowledge and technology and for the implementation of trade and business options. This area will receive 34.8% of the total resources of the fifth programme, for carrying out the proposed activities;

(d) Strengthening of technical cooperation, an area that ties in with Mexico's foreign-policy objectives in connection with support for the economic, political and social development of the country based on better integration of Mexico into the world and the promotion of international

cooperation as an essential instrument for enabling the community of nations to attain higher stages of understanding and development. UNDP cooperation will be directed along three main lines of action: (i) strengthening Mexico's capacity to offer cooperation to other developing countries and broadening the spectrum and quality of that cooperation, with special emphasis on Central America and the Caribbean; (ii) generating additional mechanisms to strengthen horizontal cooperation ties with countries of Latin America, the Pacific watershed area and Central Europe; and (iii) strengthening the national capacity for developing expeditious, permanent mechanisms to advance and strengthen the process of national project execution and establish monitoring and evaluation policies and procedures that will make it possible to adapt or reorient technical cooperation actions in their totality. It has been agreed with the Government that 24% of the total resources of the fifth cycle should be allocated to this area.

8. The fifth programme has $9.45 million in resources available under the indicative planning figure (IPF) plus $162 000 in funds carried over from the fourth programme and $9.25 million by way of cost-sharing. In addition, the country has supplementary resources on the order of $144.3 million derived from funds administered by UNDP and from other agencies of the United Nations system. Dialogue and coordination of efforts among the various agencies concerned will be essential for assuring the greatest possible benefits for the country.

III. MANAGEMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

9. The Administrator notes with satisfaction the instruments and measures which the Government, through the General Department of Technical and Scientific Cooperation of the Department of Foreign Affairs, has provided in order to ensure the effective execution of the fifth programme, and in particular: the effective coordination of the negotiation and execution of multilateral and bilateral cooperation programmes; the monitoring and evaluation of the national execution of technical cooperation projects; the dissemination of information concerning developments in the area of technical cooperation; the training of institutions and persons serving as international cooperators; and the development and modernization of the technical-cooperation information system.

10. The general functions of coordination, monitoring and evaluation for the fifth programme for Mexico will be the joint responsibility of the General Department of Technical and Scientific Cooperation of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the office of the UNDP Resident Representative. The chief mechanisms of management will be tripartite meetings, evaluation committees constituted by associate bodies, representing the participation of the society and the institutions and sectors involved, and the establishment of cooperation attachés in some Mexican diplomatic missions in other countries. An in-depth mid-term review is planned for 1994, in addition to the thematic evaluations to be carried out during the execution of the programme.

11. The national-project-execution modality is an essential component in UNDP cooperation strategy for the fifth programme. Provision has been made for

strengthening the Government's capacity to assume all the functions which this modality involves, and, with UNDP support, a set of regulations to be followed is being developed. In addition, technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) within projects will be increased, as an economic mechanism for taking advantage of experience from within the region and without. Specialized agencies of the United Nations system will also take part in the execution of highly specialized components, through high-level consultations of short duration on specific aspects having a catalytic effect on the development of national capacity.

IV. RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

12. The design of the fifth programme for Mexico is the result of an analysis of the strengths and weakness of the country in each of the priority areas for national development in which international technical cooperation can have an important impact on the country's development. The definitive formulation of the fifth programme is the result of a consensus between the Government, the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and UNDP. Owing to its nature, the fifth programme will be executed nationally, and it incorporates novel mechanisms relating to the programme approach and the evaluation of its impact.

13. For these reasons, the Administrator recommends that the Governing Council approve the fifth country programme for Mexico.